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Description

The present invention relates to printing fluid input systems for use in keyless lithographic printing processes.

In the field of high speed lithographic printing, ink is continuously conveyed from an ink source by means of a series of rollers to a planographic printing plate on a plate cylinder in a lithographic printing press. Image portions of the printing plate accept ink from one or more of the last of a series of inking rollers and transfer a portion of that ink to a blanket cylinder as a reverse image from which a portion of the ink is transferred to form a correct-reading image on paper or other materials. It is also essential in conventional lithographic printing processes that a dampening solution containing water and proprietary additives be conveyed continuously to the printing plate whereby transferring in part to the non-image areas of the printing plate the water functions to keep those non-image areas free of ink. Hereinafter, the terms "water" and "dampening solution" refer to water plus additives or to other aqueous solutions used in the operation of lithographic printing presses.

In conventional printing press systems, the ink is continuously made available in varying amounts determined by cross-press column input control adjustments to all parts of the printing plate, including both image and non-image areas. In the absence of the dampening solution, the printing plate will accept ink in both the image and non-image areas of its surface.

Lithographic printing plate surfaces in the absence of imaging materials have minute interstices and a hydrophilic or water-loving property to enhance retention of water, that is the dampening solution, rather than ink on the surface of the plate. Imaging the plate creates oleophilic or ink-loving areas according to the image that is to be printed. Consequently, when both ink and dampening solution are presented to an imaged plate in appropriate amounts, only the ink tending to reside in non-image areas becomes disbonded from the plate. In general, this action accounts for the continuous ink and dampening solution differentiation on the printing plate surface, which is essential and integral to the lithographic printing process.

Controlling the correct amount of dampening solution supplied during lithographic printing has been an industry-wide problem ever since the advent of lithography. It requires continual operator attention since each column adjustment of ink input may require a change in dampener input. Balancing the ink input that varies for each column across the width of the press with a uniform dampening solution input across the width of the press is at best a compromise. Consequently, depending upon which portion of the image the operator has adopted as his standard of print quality at any given time during the printing run, the operator may need to adjust the ink input at correspondingly-located cross-press positions. As a result, the dampening solution to ink ratio at that position may become changed from a desired value. Conversely, the operator may adjust a dampener input for best ink and dampening solution balance at one inking column, which may adversely affect the ink and dampening solution balance at one or more other cross-press locations. Adjustments such as these tend to occur repeatedly throughout the whole press run, resulting in slight to significant differences in the quality of the printed image throughout the run. In carrying out these adjustment operations, the resulting images may or may not be commercially acceptable, leading to waste in manpower, materials, and printing machine time.

Certain commercially successful newspaper printing configurations rely on the inking train rollers to carry dampening solution directly to the printing plate. Notable among these are the Goss Metro, Goss Metroliner, and the Goss Headliner Offset printing presses which are manufactured by the Graphic Systems Division of Rockwell International Corporation. In these alternative configurations, the dampening solution is combined with the ink on an inking oscillator drum such that both ink and water are subsequently and continuously transferred to the inking form rollers for deposition onto the printing plate. In another variation, the dampening solution is applied in a conventional manner directly to the printing plate by means of separate dampening rollers and a dampening solution supply system. In systems of either type, regardless of the method whereby the dampening solution is introduced, it is well known that some of the dampening solution becomes mixed with the ink and returns to the inking train of rollers and may ultimately be introduced into the ink supply system itself. In any case, these conventional lithographic systems require considerable operator attention to maintain ink and dampening solution balance and produce more product waste than desired.

Prior art devices and methods for correcting this inherent fault in conventional lithography utilize keyless inkers. Certain of these methods also involve eliminating the dampening system or eliminating operator control of the dampening system.

Keyless inking systems have been disclosed that purport to eliminate operator attention to column control of inking by elimination of adjustable inking keys, thereby avoiding much of the aforementioned disadvantages of conventional lithography. For keyless inking systems an ink metering method is required that continues to function despite the presence of up to about 40% dampening

solution in the ink without allowing any temporarily-free dampening solution to interfere with the ink-metering function. Also, the unused or non-uniform portion of the ink film that is being continuously presented to the printing plate must be continuously scraped-off the return side of the inking system to enable continuous presentation of the uniform ink film to the plate by the supply side of the inking system. This scraped-off film is not uniform across the width of the press in ink and dampening solution composition. Since it would not be economically feasible to continuously discard the ink in the unused portion of the ink and dampening solution mixture, this mixture must either be renewed by selectively removing dampening solution from the mixture and returning the ink portion to the inking system or by thoroughly intermixing the unused ink and dampening solution mixture with fresh replenishment ink and returning such mixture to the inking system. U.S. Patent 4,690,055 discloses a keyless inking system in which dampening solution removal is unnecessary and which accommodates the dampening solution that is naturally acquired in the unused ink during the practice of lithography and for which, therefore, removal of dampening solution is not required.

In the keyless inking system disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 4,690,055 (hereby incorporated by reference), the location of the dampening system is not critical and can be positioned either to supply dampening solution directly to the plate cylinder or at some other location such as at an oscillator drum to which ink is also being supplied. An ink circulating and mixing system receives new or replenishment ink, as well as, the ink and dampening solution combination, that is continuously returned from a doctor blade which scrapes excess printing fluid from a rotating metering roller. Such ink and dampening combinations are generally herein referred to as printing fluids. The printing fluid circulating and mixing system functions to assure an inherently uniform cross-press input of printing fluid that remains consistent throughout and consists of a printing fluid pan roller, pump and appropriate conduits, a printing fluid pan level controlling system, and a printing fluid reservoir of such volume and design that it assures the printing fluid being fed to the metering roller is uniform in composition at any given instant of time despite the existence of the continual cross-press dampening solution to ink ratio differences of the unused or scraped return printing fluid previously referred to. The printing fluid circulation system is designed to continuously collect and distribute the printing fluid from a reservoir through a plenum or series of orifices to uniformly redistribute the printing fluid across the press width to provide uniform composition of the printing fluid that is being introduced to the metering roller. The metering roller can be one of the types shown and described in U.S. Patent Nos. 4,882,990, 4,537,127, 4,862,799, 4,567,827, or 4,601,242, (all of which are hereby incorporated by reference) or any wear resistant oleophilic and hydrophobic metering roller as substantially therein defined.

Although the system disclosed in U.S. Patent 4,690,055 provides great improvements in lithographic printing presses, the technology requires a rather large and cumbersome ink pan arrangement that is more-or-less open to the press room environment. It requires that the pan be disposed beneath the metering roller/doctor blade confluence so that scraped off excess and return printing fluid film will fall readily into the pan arrangement. Pan roller or metering roller replacement is inconvenient and time consuming because of the large pan size and its peripheral attachments. Additionally, the pan roller requires a separate motor to drive it nominally at a speed slower than the press speed metering roller. Due to the more-or-less open nature of the pan system, the pan roller which dips into the pool of printing fluid cannot be driven at press speeds because printing fluid would be propelled from its surface in many directions, including outside of the pan regions into the pressroom. Also, the slow rotational movement of the pan roller causes undue and severe wear on the metering roller surface when the two are in indented relationship. Consequently, the pan roller/metering roller confluence must be a gap. Control of that gap to avoid metering roller wear and yet simultaneously assure complete filling of the metering roller cells is difficult to engineer and to control over long periods of running time.

The present invention overcomes the aforementioned problems, difficulties and inconveniences, yet retains all of the principles essential to keyless lithographic systems as disclosed in U.S. Patent 4,690,055. Accordingly, in this improvement the pan and pan roller are replaced by a completely enclosed, smaller and simplified printing fluid input apparatus and circulation system.

A printing fluid input apparatus as defined in the preamble of claim 1 is disclosed in EP-A-0 368 485. With this known printing fluid input apparatus the sealing means opposed from said reverse angle doctor blade is a baffle which can be spaced from or disposed for contacting the surface of the metering roller. In any case, this baffle is mounted normally with respect to the roller surface and displaced form the inlet means. The housing is divided into a first and a second zone by a protruding edge, so that a narrow linear constriction is defined between the edge and the roller surface to apply high rates of shear to the ink. The pressure in the second zone including the outlet is preset by

a pressure relief valve.

In US-A-2,151,968 an inking mechanism including means for defining the walls of an elongated ink supply channel is disclosed. One side of the ink supply channel is formed by a doctor blade contacting the roller surface in a trailing position, whereas the opposite side is formed by a relatively short sealing strip slightly displaced from the inlet. The ends of the ink supply channel are normally open. Only labyrinth sealing bands are used at these ends which are not in actual contact with the roller surface. Surplus ink which flows out the ends of the ink supply channel is thrown off the ends of the printing roller during operation of the printing press. Ink guards are provided to collect the thrown-off ink which is returned to the ink system.

US-A-4,601,242 discloses an oleophilic/hydrophobic ink metering roller for use in a lithographic printing press. With such a printing press an ink pan arrangement is used that is more or less open to the press room environment.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to provide an improved keyless lithographic printing system having more simplified printing fluid input means than are required in prior art keyless lithographic printing systems.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a closed pressurized printing fluid input system for conveying printing fluid to the lithographic printing press.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a printing fluid circulating system that functions to assure that the aqueous dampening solution that naturally appears in the ink is maintained in a thoroughly homogenized condition thereby negating buildup of free dampening solution anywhere in the inking system which would result in debonding of the ink from the metering roller and inking rollers.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a printing fluid input apparatus which can be positioned anywhere on the circumference of the metering roller.

It is yet a further object of the present invention to provide a controlled flow of substantially uniform printing fluid through the printing fluid input apparatus.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a printing fluid circulating system having a printing fluid reservoir whose location is independent of the location of the printing fluid input apparatus.

The objects are achieved by a keyless lithographic printing press as defined in claim 1.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The features of the present invention which are believed to be novel, are set forth with particularity in the appended claims. The invention, together with further objects and advantages, may best be understood by reference to the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in the several Figures in which like reference numerals identify like elements, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a schematic side view of a keyless lithographic printing press system in accordance with the present invention;

FIGS. 2 and 3 are plan and elevation views, respectively, of the printing fluid input apparatus of the present invention and of a metering roller;

FIG. 4 is an end view of the printing fluid input apparatus and the metering roller;

FIG. 5 is a partial plan view of the printing fluid input apparatus;

FIG. 6 is an end view of the metering roller and the printing fluid input apparatus in an open servicing position;

FIGS. 7, 8 and 9 are a plan view, an elevation view and a side view of a gage assembly used in the present invention;

FIGS. 10 and 11 are a plan view and an elevation view of a seal cap assembly used in the present invention; and

FIGS. 12 and 13 are schematic representations of pressurized printing fluid circulation systems used with the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

A keyless inking system incorporating the present invention is depicted in FIG. 1 in which a blanket cylinder 10 prints on a web traveling as indicated by the directional arrow 12. Referring first to the dampening and inking systems associated with blanket cylinder 10, a plate cylinder 15 is contacted by two ink form rollers 16 which are in turn contacted by a metering roller 20 via copper drum 11 and two transfer rollers 13. The ink metering roller 20 is preferably of the type disclosed in U.S. Patent Nos. 4,862,799, 4,882,990, 4,537,127, 4,567,827 or 4,601,242 which were cited previously. In the dampening arrangement associated with plate cylinder 15 there typically is provided a rubber dampener form roller 19 and, for instance, a copper covered or a chrome covered oscillating transfer roller 22. The water is contained in a pan tray 23 and a pan roller 24 is used to pick up water from the pan 23 to bring it into contact with a spiral brush roller 25 that is rotating in a direction opposite to the direction of rotation of pan roller 24. It should be recognized that virtually any known

dampening system can be used with the present invention.

With this or other arrangements dampening solution is transferred onto the transfer roller 22 and from there to the dampener form roller 19. The form roller 19 is typically positioned in a water-first sequence so that, during each revolution of the press subsequent to transferring ink to the blanket cylinder 10, plates are first subjected to dampening solution from the dampener form roller 19 before renewed printing fluid is applied to the imaged surface of the plates by means of the rubber covered ink form rollers 16.

The most significant part of the present invention is the inking system that is used to supply printing fluid to the plate and blanket cylinders 15, 10. This system, makes it possible to supply a uniform mixture of ink and naturally occurring dampening solution to the plate cylinder 15 and thereby maintain the high print quality characteristic of conventional lithography. In this arrangement the printing fluid input system is identified generally by the numeral 30 and is used to deliver ink containing dampening solution, also referred to as the printing fluid, to the metering roller 20. Dampening solution in this system is not deliberately added to the ink but rather results naturally from ink coming in contact with dampening solution on the printing plate cylinder 15 and which, by means of the unused or return portion of printing fluid that passes or transfers back down through the various rollers, in part eventually enters the printing fluid input system 30.

The printing fluid input apparatus of the system 30 of the present invention is depicted in an open servicing position relative to the metering roller 20 in FIGS. 2 and 3. An end view of the apparatus engaged with the metering roller 20 in a closed operating position is depicted in FIG. 4. The metering roller 20 has first and second ends 32 and 34 which rotate in frames 36 and 38, respectively. The metering roller 20 has a surface 40 intermediate the first and second ends 32 and 34, the surface 40 capable of retaining a quantity of printing fluid. A housing 42 has an open first side 46 which mates with at least a portion of the surface 40 of the metering roller 20. When the housing 42 is in the closed operating position a chamber 44 is formed which contains the printing fluid under a predetermined pressure.

At least first and second end seal assemblies 48 and 50 are mounted on first and second opposed ends 52 and 54, respectively, of the housing 42. Each of the first and second end seal assemblies 48 and 50 have at least a first surface 56 for mating with first and second end sections 58 and 60, respectively, of the metering roller 20.

Referring now also to FIGS. 4 and 5 a reverse angle doctor blade 62 is attached to a second side 64 of the housing 42 and has an edge 66 for contacting the surface 40 of the metering roller 20 and for removing excess printing fluid adhering to the surface 40 as the metering roller 20 rotates past the printing fluid filled chamber 44. A sealing member 68 is attached to a third side 70 of the housing 42 and has a surface area 72 for substantially sealing the chamber 44, at least the surface area 72 of the sealing member 68 being adjacent the surface 40 of the metering roller 20 such that an edge 74 of the sealing member 68 extends into the chamber 44. The sealing member 68 is substantially longer and more flexible than the reverse angle doctor blade 62.

Since the printing fluid in the chamber 44 is under pressure it is a feature of the present invention that the reverse angle doctor blade 62 is held against the surface 40 of the metering roller 20 at least in part by this pressurized printing fluid in the chamber 44.

It is well known in the art of printing presses to provide devices which cause selected rollers or cylinders to oscillate (for example the roller oscillation drive disclosed in Goss Metroliner Parts Catalog No. 280-PC, Figure 280-56). In the present invention such a means for oscillating 76 can be attached to the metering roller 20, thus providing oscillation to the metering roller 20, while the housing 42 of the printing fluid input apparatus 30 remains stationary. The metering roller 20 is of the type having an oleophilic and hydrophobic surface.

Depending upon the application it may or may not be necessary to provide oscillation to the metering roller 20. However, it is a novel feature of the present invention that in those applications where it is desirable to provide oscillation to the metering roller 20 it is feasible to accomplish this with the printing fluid input apparatus of the present invention.

The sealing member 68 may, for instance, be formed of steel or plastic and have a width in the range of approximately 25.4 to 50.8 mm (1 to 2 inches) and a thickness in the range of approximately 0.1 to 0.25 mm (0.004 to 0.01 inch) selected as a function of the open first side dimension of the housing 42 and of the diameter of the metering roller 20 which mates with the open first side, such that the sealing member 68 properly seals the chamber 44. The reverse angle doctor blade 62 may be formed of steel or plastic and in general have a width of approximately 25.4 mm (1 inch) and a thickness in the range of approximately 0.1 to 0.25 mm (0.004 to 0.01 inch), if steel, and 1.02 to 1.52 mm (0.04 to 0.06 inch), if plastic.

As shown in FIG. 6 the housing 42 is attached to a support 80 which is pivotable about axis 82

and thus provides an open servicing position and a closed operating position. The housing 42, as well as metering roller 20, are shown in the open servicing position in FIGS. 2 and 3, FIG. 2 being a plan view and FIG. 3 being an elevation view.

The printing fluid input apparatus further includes at least one inlet means 102 in the housing 42 for inputting printing fluid into the chamber 44 and at least one outlet means 104 in the housing 42 for outputting printing fluid from the chamber 44. Since the chamber 44 is sealed by the metering roller 20, the first and second end assemblies 48 and 50, the reverse angle doctor blade 62 and the sealing member 68, it is thus possible to keep the printing fluid under a predetermined pressure. In the preferred embodiment, as will be discussed below, a circulating system is used to pump the printing fluid through the housing 42. It is an important feature of the present invention that, since the printing fluid is under pressure, the printing fluid circulation system is totally independent of the force of gravity as opposed to prior art systems that rely on the printing fluid falling into a reservoir or catch pan. Therefore, the housing 42 can be located anywhere around the circumference the metering roller 20. This has significant and important advantages in the art of keyless lithographic printing press design. It allows for printing couples of a press to be inverted thereby shorting the length of the paper path between the couples, as well as, providing savings in space and materials of construction. This freedom to locate the housing 42 anywhere around the circumference of the metering roller 20 provides a degree of freedom in design of the printing press not found in prior art keyless printing presses.

Furthermore, the housing 42 can be designed to extend the full axial length of the surface 40 of the metering roller 20 or to extend only over a portion of the surface 40. For example, a number of housings, each less than full press width, can be located on one metering roller. Also, the housing 42 can be structured to wrap around the circumference of the metering roller 20 to greater or lesser extents depending upon the criteria of the press being design.

Referring now to FIGS. 10 and 11, each of the end seal assemblies 48 and 50 shown in FIGS. 2 and 3 has a seal 90 which is supported by a seal cap 92. As can be seen in FIG. 5 the seal cap 92 is attached to an end of the housing 42, more specifically a seal cap assembly is attached to each end of the housing 42.

Furthermore, the present invention can include a gage assembly 94, as shown in FIGS. 7, 8 and 9, which engages the housing 42 with a locating pin 96 when the housing 42 is pivoted into the closed operating position for accurate positioning of the housing 42 relative to the metering roller 20, see FIG. 6. The gage assemblies 94 are located adjacent the first and second end sections 32 and 34 of the metering roller 20. The gage assembly 94 has first and second sections 81, 83 which surround the ends 32, 34 of the metering roller 20.

In general a means 100 for pressurizing with the printing fluid the chamber 44 in the housing 42 is connected to the housing 42 via the inlet means 102 and the outlet means 104 on the housing 42.

As shown in FIG. 12, the means 100 for pressurizing is a circulating system having a pump 106 with an output 108 and an input 110. The output 108 of the pump 106 is connected to a pressure regulating check valve 111 and to the inlet means 102 of the housing 42. The input 110 of the pump 106 is connected to an printing fluid reservoir 112 which is also connected to the outlet means 104 of the housing 42. As shown in FIG. 12 the pressure regulating check valve 111 is also connected to the printing fluid reservoir 112. In the preferred embodiment the pump 106 is driven by a constant speed drive motor 114 which is connected to press/unit controls 116 of the printing press. The press/unit controls 116 may also receive signals from a sensor 118 mounted in the housing 42 for sensing the pressure of the printing fluid in the chamber 44 of the housing 42. In one embodiment a pressure of 4-6 psi is maintained in the chamber 44 to enable smooth consistent printing fluid input to metering roller 20. The pressure regulating check valve 111 functions to set the pressure of 4-6 psi in the chamber 44 and allows a portion of the printing fluid to flow back into the printing fluid reservoir 112, as necessary.

FIG. 13 depicts an alternative means 100 for pressurizing the chamber 44 wherein the pump 106 is driven by a motor 120 which is operated at a speed proportional to the speed of the printing press via variable speed drive 122. In this embodiment the output 108 of the pump 106 is connected to the inlet means 102 of the housing 42 and the outlet means 104 of the housing 42 is connected to the printing fluid reservoir 112. The input 106 of the pump is also connected to the printing fluid reservoir 112. Various means can be used to add fresh replacement ink to the printing fluid reservoir 112 in either the FIG. 12 or FIG. 13 embodiments as needed. For example, the means can include solenoid valve 124 which is connected to a press/unit controller 126, the press/unit controller 126 receiving a signal from a printing fluid level sensor 128 connected to the printing fluid reservoir 112. It is a novel feature of the present invention that the printing fluid reservoir 112 can be located at any position relative to the chamber 44, higher or lower than the chamber 44, since the printing fluid flow is regulated by internal pressure rather than by the

force of gravity.

In addition the present invention can include a means 130 for controlling the temperature of the printing fluid in the chamber 44 of the housing 42. For example, as shown in FIG. 13, the means 130 for controlling the temperature can be connected directly to the housing 42 or as shown in FIG. 12 the means 130 for controlling the temperature can be connected to the printing fluid reservoir 112. The means for controlling the temperature can utilize resistance element strip heaters affixed to the housing 42 (for example, a Chromalox No. SL0515 flexible resistive element heater). For the printing fluid reservoir 112 an immersion heater such as Chromalox No. ARMTO-2155T2 can be used.

The present invention overcomes a number of problems, difficulties and restrictions in prior art keyless lithographic printing systems. For instance, the pan and pan roller of the cited prior art (U. S. Patent No. 4,690,055) are replaced by a smaller and less complicated housing that together with the metering roller surface form a completely enclosed housing.

The inks selected for use in the present invention preferably have low values of viscosity at low rates of shear so that the printing fluid flows readily as compared to conventional lithographic inks. An ink having this property readily flows into and, subsequent to doctor blade metering as herein practiced, out of the cells or interslices in the surface of the rapidly rotating metering roller 20 as it moves past the pressurized slowly circulating printing fluid in chamber 44.

An important feature when using a low viscosity printing fluid with the present invention is that the ink can be formulated to have good printing fluid transfer properties in the inking train of rollers and yet have any of a wide range of viscosity values at low shear rates. This capability is not possible with prior art pan roller printing fluid input systems as the amount of fluid input to the metering roller is dependent upon the pan roller force and not on the printing fluid's mobility. This capability is also not possible without the use of oleophilic and hydrophobic metering rollers since water is more readily forced out of low viscosity printing fluids and in the absence of the hydrophobic property will debond the fluid from the metering roller, thereby negating control of ink input.

The invention is not limited to the particular details of the apparatus depicted and other modifications and applications are contemplated. Certain other changes may be made in the above described apparatus without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims. It is intended, therefore, that the subject matter in the above depiction shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

Claims

1. In a keyless lithographic printing press having blanket cylinder (10), plate cylinder (15) with printing plate mounted thereon, form rollers (16), optionally a set of two or more inking rollers (11, 13) and a system (19, 22-25) for supplying dampening water to the printing plate, a printing fluid input apparatus (30) comprising:

metering roller (20) having a surface (40) which retains a quantity of printing fluid;

means (42) for housing having an open first side (46) which mates with at least a portion of said surface (40) of said metering roller (20) to define a closed chamber (44) substantially filled with said printing fluid under pressure;

at least first and second means (48, 50) for end sealing mounted on opposed ends (52, 54) of said means (42) for housing, each of said first and second means (48, 50) for end sealing slidably engaging said metering roller (20);

a reverse angle doctor blade (62) for substantially removing excess printing fluid adhering to said surface (40) of said metering roller (20) as said metering roller (20) rotates past said chamber (44) containing said printing fluid, said reverse angle doctor blade (62) attached to said means (42) for housing and having at least an edge (66) for substantially contacting said surface (40) of said metering roller (20);

means (68) for sealing attached to said means (42) for housing opposed from said reverse angle doctor blade (62);

at least one inlet means (102) in said means (42) for housing for inputting said printing fluid into said chamber (44) and at least one outlet means (104) in said means (42) for housing for outputting printing fluid from said chamber (44), said inlet means (102) and said outlet means (104) connected to a means (100) for pressurizing said printing fluid; and

said reverse angle doctor blade (62) being held against said surface (40) of said metering roller (20) at least partly by the pressurized fluid in said chamber (44);

characterized by:

said metering roller (20) having at least an oleophilic and hydrophobic surface (40);

said sealing means opposed from said reverse angle doctor blade (62) being a surface sealing blade (68) that is substantially longer and more flexible than said reverse angle doctor blade (62) and extends into said chamber (44) for providing an extended surface sealing area

(72) opposite to said inlet means (102) and adjacent said surface (40) of said metering roller (20);

each of said first and second end sealing means (48, 50) comprising a seal (90) composed of pliable material for forming a substantially fluid tight seal for said housing means (42) by engaging ends of said reverse angle doctor blade (62), ends of said surface sealing blade (68) and first and second sections (58, 60) of said metering roller (20); and said pressurizing means (100) comprising means (116, 126) for controlling the rate of flow of said printing fluid through said chamber (44).

2. The printing fluid input apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said surface sealing blade (68) seals statically and floats dynamically, said surface sealing blade (68) substantially floating and forming a hydrodynamic seal between said surface (40) of said metering roller (20) and said surface sealing area (72) of said surface sealing blade (68) when said metering roller (20) rotates, and said surface sealing blade (68) substantially contacting said metering roller (20) and forming a contact seal between said surface (40) of said metering roller (20) and said surface sealing area (72) of said surface sealing blade (68) when said metering roller (20) is stationary, thereby sealing said chamber (44) to keep said printing fluid in said chamber (44) under pressure.

3. The printing fluid input apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said means (100) for pressurizing said printing fluid has at least a printing fluid reservoir (112) located at a position independent of a position of said chamber (44) in said means (42) for housing.

4. The printing fluid input apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said metering roller (20) has at least first and second ends (32, 34) mounted for rotation about an axis and having said oleophilic and hydrophobic surface (40) intermediate said first and second ends (32, 34);

each of said first and second end sealing means (48, 50) has at least a first surface (56) for mating with said first and second end sections (58, 60), respectively, of said metering roller (20);

said reverse angle doctor blade (62) is attached to a second side (64) of said housing (42);

said surface sealing blade (68) is attached to a third side (70) of said housing (42), said third side (70) of said housing (42) being opposed from said second side (64) of said housing (42);

at least, said metering roller (20), said first and second end sealing means (48, 50), said reverse angle doctor blade (62) and said surafce sealing blade (68) form a means for substantially sealing said chamber (44) such that said printing fluid is under said pressure.

5. The printing fluid input system according to claim 1 or 4, wherein said housing (42) is located relative to said metering roller surface (40) at a position which is one of all angular positions about the axis of said metering roller (20).

6. The printing fluid input system according to claim 4, wherein said pressurizing means (100) is a circulating system having a pump (106) driven at a speed related to the speed of the printing press, said pump (106) having an output (108) connected to said inlet means (102) of said housing (42) and an input (110) connected to a printing fluid reservoir (112), said outlet means (104) of said housing (42) also connected to said printing fluid reservoir (112).

7. The printing fluid input system according to claim 4, wherein said pressurizing means (100) is a circulating system having a pump (106) with an output (108) connected to at least one regulating check valve (111) in at least one bypass branch of the circulating system, said bypass branch also connected to a printing fluid reservoir (112) in said system, said output of said pump (106) also connected to said inlet means (102) of said housing (42) and said outlet means (104) of said housing (42) connected to an input (110) of said pump (106) via said printing fluid reservoir (112).

8. The printing fluid input system according to claim 6 or 7, wherein said printing fluid reservoir (112) is located at a position independent of a position of said chamber (44) in said housing (42).

9. The printing fluid input system according to claim 4, wherein said metering roller (20) further has at least one gage assembly (94) located adjacent at least one of said first and second end sections (58, 60) of said metering roller (20) for engaging said housing (42) and positioning said housing (42) relative to said metering roller (20).

10. The printing fluid input system according to claim 4, wherein said flexible surface sealing

blade (68) has a first edge attached to said housing (42) and a second edge (74) disposed in said chamber (44), said surface sealing area (72) of said surface sealing blade (68) being intermediate said first and second edges and substantially adjacent said surface (40) of said metering roller (20).

11. The printing fluid input apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said metering roller (20) has at least first and second ends (32, 34) mounted for rotation about an axis and having said oleophilic and hydrophobic surface (40) intermediate said first and second ends (32, 34);

said housing (42) is located relative to said metering roller surface (40) at a position which is one of all angular positions about the axis of said metering roller (20);

each seal (90) of said first and second end sealing means (48, 50) has at least a first surface (56) for mating with said at least first and second end sections (58, 60), respectively, of said metering roller (20);

said reverse angle doctor blade (62) has a first edge attached to a second side (64) of said housing (42) and has a second edge (66) for substantially contacting said surface (40) of said metering roller (20) and for removing excess printing fluid adhering to said surface (40) as said metering roller (20) rotates past said chamber (44) containing said printing fluid;

said surface sealing blade (68) is attached to a third side (70) of said housing (42), said third side (70) of said housing (42) being opposed from said second side (64) of said housing (42), and said surface sealing blade (68) has a first edge attached to said housing (42) and a second edge (74) extending into said chamber (44), said surface sealing area (72) of said surface sealing member (68) being intermediate said first and second edges; and

said pressurizing means (100) has a printing fluid reservoir (112) which is located at a position independent of a position of said chamber (44) in said housing (42).

12. The printing fluid input system according to claim 4 or 11, wherein said open first side (46) of said housing (42) has a length substantially equal to an axial length of said surface (40) of said metering roller (20).

13. The printing fluid input system according to claim 4 or 11, wherein means for oscillating is connected to said metering roller (20), said housing (42) being stationary when said metering roller (20) is oscillated.

14. The printing fluid input system according to claim 11, wherein said pressurizing means (100) is a circulating system having a pump (106) driven at a speed related to the speed of the printing press, said pump (106) having an output (108) connected to said inlet means (102) of said housing (42) and an input (110) connected to a printing fluid reservoir (112), said outlet means (104) of said housing (42) also connected to said printing fluid reservoir (112).

15. The printing fluid input system according to claim 11, wherein said pressurizing means (100) is a circulating system having a pump (106) with an output (108) connected to at least one regulating check valve (111) in at least one bypass branch of the circulating system, said bypass branch also connected to a printing fluid reservoir (112) in said system, said output of said pump (106) also connected to said inlet means (102) of said housing (42) and said outlet means (104) of said housing (42) connected to an input (110) of said pump (106) via said printing fluid reservoir (112).

16. The printing fluid input system according to claim 4 or 11, wherein each of said end sealing means (48, 50) has a seal cap (92) attached to said housing (42) containing said seal (90) having a configuration which substantially conforms to its respective end section (58, 60) of said metering roller (20).

17. The printing fluid input system according to claim 11, wherein said metering roller (20) further has first and second gage assemblies (94) located adjacent said first and second end sections (58, 60), respectively, of said metering roller (20) for engaging said housing (42) and positioning said housing (42) relative to said metering roller (20).

18. The printing fluid input system according to claim 1, 4 or 11, wherein means (82) is provided for pivoting said housing (42) between at least a first operating position against said metering roller (20) and at least a second servicing position away from said metering roller (20).

19. The printing fluid input system according to claim 4 or 11, wherein said surface sealing blade (68) is formed of plastic and has a width in the range of approximately 25.4 to 50.8 mm (1 to 2 inches) and a thickness in the range of approximately 0.1 to 0.25 mm (.004 to 0.01 inch).

20. The printing fluid input system according to claim 4 or 11, wherein said surface sealing blade (68) is formed of steel and has a width in the range of approximately 25.4 to 50.8 mm (1 to 2 inches) and a thickness in the range of approximately 0.1 to 0.25 mm (0.004 to 0.01 inch).

21. The printing fluid input system according to claim 4 or 11, wherein said reverse angle doctor blade (62) is formed of steel and has a width of approximately 25.4 mm (1 inch) and a thickness in the range of approximately 0.1 to 0.25 mm (0.004 to 0.01 inch).

22. The printing fluid input system according to claim 14, wherein said reverse angle doctor blade (62) is formed of plastic and has a width of approximately 25.4 mm (1 inch) and a thickness in the range of approximately 1.02 to 1.52 mm (0.04 to 0.06 inch).

Patentansprüche

1. Vorrichtung (30) zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit bei einer zonenschraubenlosen Lithographie-Druckerpresse, die einen Drucktuchzylinder (10), einen Plattenzylinder (15) mit einer darauf angebrachten Druckplatte, Formwalzen (16), optional einen Satz von zwei oder mehr Farbwalzen (11, 13) und ein System (19, 22 bis 25) zum Aufbringen von Befeuchtungswasser auf die Druckplatte aufweist, enthaltend:
eine Dosierwalze (20) mit einer Oberfläche (40), die eine Menge von Druckflüssigkeit zurückhält;
ein Gehäuse (42) mit einer offenen ersten Seite (46), welche mit wenigstens einem Teil der Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze (20) zusammenpaßt, um eine geschlossene Kammer (44) abzugrenzen, die im wesentlichen mit der unter Druck stehenden Druckflüssigkeit gefüllt ist;
wenigstens ein erstes und ein zweites Enddichtmittel (48, 50), die an zueinander entgegengesetzten Enden (52, 54) des Gehäuses (42) angebracht sind, wobei das erste und das zweite Enddichtmittel (48, 50) jeweils gleitend an der Dosierwalze (20) angreifen;
eine gegenläufige Abstreifklinge (62), um an der Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze (20) anhaftende überschüssige Druckflüssigkeit im wesentlichen zu entfernen, wenn sich die Dosierwalze (20) an der die Druckflüssigkeit enthaltenden Kammer (44) vorbeidreht, wobei die gegenläufige Abstreifklinge (62) an dem Gehäuse (42) befestigt ist und wenigstens eine Kante (66) aufweist, welche die Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze (20) im wesentlichen berührt;
Dichtmittel (68), die an dem Gehäuse (42) entgegengesetzt zu der gegenläufigen Abstreifklinge (62) angebracht sind;
wenigstens ein Einlaßmittel (102) in dem Gehäuse (42), um der Kammer (44) die Druckflüssigkeit zuzuführen, und wenigstens ein Auslaßmittel (104) in dem Gehäuse (42), um Druckflüssigkeit aus der Kammer (44) abzuführen, wobei das Einlaßmittel (102) und das Auslaßmittel (104) mit einem Mittel (100) verbunden sind, welches die Druckflüssigkeit mit einem Druck beaufschlagt;
wobei die gegenläufige Abstreifklinge (62) an der Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze (20) wenigstens teilweise von der unter Druck stehenden Flüssigkeit in der Kammer (44) gehalten wird;
dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß:
die Dosierwalze (20) wenigstens eine oleophile und hydrophobe Oberfläche (40) aufweist;
das zu der gegenläufigen Abstreifklinge (62) entgegengesetzte Dichtmittel eine Flächendichtklinge (68) ist, die im wesentlichen länger und flexibler als die gegenläufige Abstreifklinge (62) ist und sich in die Kammer (64) hineinerstreckt, um einen ausgedehnten Flächendichtbereich (72) bereitzustellen, der zu dem Einlaßmittel (102) entgegengesetzt und der Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze (20) benachbart ist;
wobei das erste und das zweite Enddichtmittel (48, 50) jeweils eine Dichtung (90) umfassen, die aus einem biegsamen Material besteht, um eine im wesentlichen flüssigkeitsdichte Dichtung für das Gehäuse (42) zu bilden, indem sie an Enden der gegenläufigen Abstreifklinge (62), an Enden der Flächendichtklinge (68) und an ersten und zweiten Abschnitten (58, 60) der Dosierwalze (20) angreift, und wobei das Druckbeaufschlagungsmittel (100) ein Mittel (116, 126) zum Steuern der Durchflußrate der Druckflüssigkeit durch die Kammer (44) umfaßt.

2. Vorrichtung zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 1, bei dem die Flächendichtklinge (68) statisch abdichtet und dynamisch schwimmt, wobei die Flächendichtklinge (68) im wesentlichen schwimmt und eine hydrodynamische Dichtung zwischen der Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze (20) und dem Flächendichtbereich (72) der Flächendichtklinge (68) bildet, wenn sich die Dosierwalze (20) dreht, wobei die Flächendichtklinge (68) die Dosierwalze (20) im wesentlichen berührt und eine Kontaktdichtung zwischen der Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze (20) und dem Flächendichtbe-

reich (72) der Flächendichtklinge (68) bildet, wenn die Dosierwalze (20) steht, wodurch die Kammer (44) abgedichtet ist, um die Druckflüssigkeit in der Kammer (44) unter Druck zu halten.

3. Vorrichtung zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 1, bei der das Mittel (100) zum Beaufschlagen der Druckflüssigkeit mit Druck wenigstens einen Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter (112) aufweist, der in einer Positon angeordnet ist, die unabhängig von einer Position der Kammer (44) in dem Gehäuse (42) ist.

4. Vorrichtung zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 1, bei der die Dosierwalze (20) wenigstens ein erstes und ein zweites Ende (32, 34) aufweist, die um eine Achse drehbar angebracht sind, wobei die oleophile und hydrophobe Oberfläche (40) zwischen dem ersten und dem zweiten Ende (32, 34) liegt;
bei der das erste und das zweite Enddichtmittel (48, 50) jeweils wenigstens eine erste Fläche (56) aufweisen, die mit dem ersten Endabschnitt (58) bzw. dem zweiten Endabschnitt (60) der Dosierwalze (20) zusammenpaßt;
bei der die gegenläufige Abstreifklinge (62) an einer zweiten Seite (64) des Gehäuses (42) befestigt ist;
bei der die Flächendichtklinge (68) an einer dritten Seite (70) des Gehäuses (42) befestigt ist, wobei die dritte Seite (70) des Gehäuses (42) zu der zweiten Seite (64) des Gehäuses (42) entgegengesetzt ist; und
bei der wenigstens die Dosierwalze (20), das erste und das zweite Enddichtmittel (48, 50), die gegenläufige Abstreifklinge (62) und die Flächendichtklinge (68) ein Mittel bilden, um die Kammer (44) im wesentlichen abzudichten, so daß die Druckflüssigkeit unter dem Druck steht.

5. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 1 oder Anspruch 4, bei dem das Gehäuse (42) relativ zu der Dosierwalzen-Oberfläche (40) in einer Position angeordnet ist, die eine beliebige Winkelposition um die Achse der Dosierwalze (20) ist.

6. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 4, bei dem das Druckbeaufschlagungsmittel (100) ein Zirkulationssystem mit einer Pumpe (106) ist, die mit einer mit der Geschwindigkeit der Druckerpresse in Beziehung stehenden Geschwindigkeit angetrieben wird, wobei die Pumpe (106) einen mit dem Einlaßmittel (102) des Gehäuses (42) verbundenen Ausgang (108) und einen Eingang (110) aufweist, der mit einem Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter (112) verbunden ist, wobei das Auslaßmittel (104) des Gehäuses (42) ebenfalls mit dem Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter (112) verbunden ist.

7. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 4, bei dem das Druckbeaufschlagungsmittel (100) ein Zirkulationssystem mit einer Pumpe (106) ist, die einen Ausgang (108) aufweist, der mit wenigstens einem Regel-Rückschlagventil (111) in wenigstens einem Umgehungszweig des Zirkulationssystems verbunden ist, wobei der Umgehungszweig ebenfalls mit einem Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter (112) in dem System verbunden ist, wobei der Ausgang der Pumpe (106) auch mit dem Einlaßmittel (102) des Gehäuses (42) verbunden ist und wobei das Auslaßmittel (104) des Gehäuses (42) über den Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter (112) mit einem Eingang (110) der Pumpe (106) verbunden ist.

8. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 6 oder Anspruch 7, bei dem der Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter (112) an einer Position angeordnet ist, die unabhängig von einer Position der Kammer (44) in dem Gehäuse (42) ist.

9. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 4, bei dem die Dosierwalze (20) zusätzlich wenigstens eine Paßvorrichtung (94) aufweist, die in der Nähe von wenigstens dem ersten oder dem zweiten Endabschnitt (58, 60) der Dosierwalze (20) angeordnet ist, um an dem Gehäuse (42) anzugreifen und dieses relativ zu der Dosierwalze (20) zu positionieren.

10. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 4, bei dem die flexible Flächendichtklinge (68) eine an dem Gehäuse (42) befestigte erste Kante und eine in der Kammer (44) angeordnete zweite Kante (74) aufweist, wobei der Flächendichtbereich (72) der Flächendichtklinge (68) zwischen der ersten und der zweiten Kante und im wesentlichen angrenzend an die Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze (20) liegt.

11. Vorrichtung zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 2, bei der die Dosierwalze (20) wenigstens ein erstes und ein zweites Ende (32, 34) aufweist, die um eine Achse drehbar angeordnet sind, wobei die oleophile und hydrophobe Oberfläche (40) zwischen dem ersten und dem zweiten Ende (32, 34) liegt;

bei der das Gehäuse (42) relativ zu der Dosierwalzen-Oberfläche (40) in einer Position angeordnet ist, die eine beliebige Winkelposition um die Achse der Dosierwalze (20) ist;
bei der jede Dichtung (90) des ersten und des zweiten Enddichtmittels (48, 50) wenigstens eine erste Fläche (56) aufweist, welche mit dem ersten bzw. dem zweiten Endabschnitt (58, 60) der Dosierwalze (20) zusammenpaßt;
bei der die gegenläufige Abstreifklinge (62) eine erste Kante (64) aufweist, die an einer zweiten Seite (64) des Gehäuses (42) befestigt ist, und eine zweite Kante (66), welche die Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze berührt, um an der Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze (20) anhaftende überschüssige Druckflüssigkeit zu entfernen, wenn sich die Dosierwalze (20) an der die Druckflüssigkeit enthaltenden Kammer (44) vorbeidreht,
bei der die Flächendichtklinge (68) an einer dritten Seite (70) des Gehäuses (42) befestigt ist, wobei die dritte Seite (70) des Gehäuses (42) zu der zweiten Seite (64) des Gehäuses (42) entgegengesetzt ist, und bei der die Flächendichtklinge (68) eine an dem Gehäuse (42) befestigte erste Kante und eine sich in die Kammer (44) hineinerstreckende zweite Kante (74) aufweist, wobei der Flächendichtbereich (72) der Flächendichteinrichtung (68) zwischen der ersten und der zweiten Kante liegt; und
bei der das Druckbeaufschlagungsmittel (100) einen Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter(112) aufweist, der in einer von der Position der Kammer (44) in dem Gehäuse (42) unabhängigen Position angeordnet ist.

12. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 4 oder Anspruch 11, bei dem die erste geöffnete Seite (46) des Gehäuses (42) eine Länge aufweist, die im wesentlichen gleich einer axialen Länge der Oberfläche (40) der Dosierwalze (20) ist.

13. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 4 oder Anspruch 11, bei dem ein Schwingungsmittel mit der Dosierwalze (20) verbunden ist, wobei das Gehäuse (42) feststehend ist, wenn die Dosierwalze (20) in Schwingungen versetzt wird.

14. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 11, bei dem das Druckbeaufschlagungsmittel (100) ein Zirkulationssystem mit einer Pumpe (106) ist, die mit einer mit der Geschwindigkeit der Druckerpresse in Beziehung stehenden Geschwindigkeit angetrieben wird, wobei die Pumpe (106) einen mit dem Einlaßmittel (102) des Gehäuses (42) verbundenen Ausgang (108) und einen Eingang (110) aufweist, der mit einem Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter (112) verbunden ist, wobei das Auslaßmittel (104) des Gehäuses (42) ebenfalls mit dem Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter (112) verbunden ist.

15. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 11, bei dem das Druckbeaufschlagungsmittel (100) ein Zirkulationssystem mit einer Pumpe (106) ist, die einen Ausgang (108) aufweist, der mit wenigstens einem Regel-Rückschlagventil (111) in wenigstens einem Umgehungszweig des Zirkulationssystems verbunden ist, wobei der Umgehungszweig ebenfalls mit einem Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter (112) in dem System verbunden ist, wobei der Ausgang der Pumpe (106) auch mit dem Einlaßmittel (102) des Gehäuses (42) verbunden ist und wobei das Auslaßmittel (104) des Gehäuses (42) über den Druckflüssigkeitsvorratsbehälter (112) mit einem Eingang (110) der Pumpe (106) verbunden ist.

16. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 4 oder Anspruch 11, bei dem jedes der Enddichtmittel (48, 50) eine an dem Gehäuse (42) befestigte Dichtungskappe (92) aufweist, welche die Dichtung (90) enthält, deren Gestalt im wesentlichen an den jeweiligen Endabschnitt (58, 60) der Dosierwalze (20) angepaßt ist.

17. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 11, bei dem die Dosierwalze (20) außerdem eine erste und eine zweite Paßvorrichtung (94) aufweist, die in der Nähe des ersten bzw. zweiten Endabschnitts (58, 60) der Dosierwalze (20) angeordnet sind, um an dem Gehäuse (42) anzugreifen und das Gehäuse (42) relativ zu der Dosierwalze (20) zu positionieren.

18. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach einem der Ansprüche 1, 4 und 11, bei dem ein Mittel (82) vorgesehen ist, um das Gehäuse (42) zwischen wenigstens einer ersten Betriebsstellung an der Dosierwalze (20) und wenigstens einer von der Dosierwalze (20) entfernten zweiten Wartungsstellung zu verschwenken.

19. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 4 oder Anspruch 11, bei dem die Flächendichtklinge (68) aus Kunststoff ausgebildet ist und eine Breite im Bereich von etwa 25,4 bis 50,8 mm (1 bis 2 Inch) und eine Dicke im Bereich von etwa 0,1 bis 0,25 mm

(0,004 bis 0,01 Inch) aufweist.

20. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 4 oder Anspruch 11, bei dem die Flächendichtklinge (68) aus Stahl besteht und eine Breite im Bereich von etwa 25,4 bis 50,8 mm (1 bis 2 Inch) und eine Dicke im Bereich von etwa 0,1 bis 0,25 mm (0,004 bis 0,01 Inch) aufweist.

21. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 4 oder 11, bei dem die gegenläufige Abstreifklinge (62) aus Stahl besteht und eine Breite von etwa 25,4 mm (1 Inch) und eine Dicke im Bereich von etwa 0,1 bis 0,25 mm (0,004 bis 0,01 Inch) aufweist.

22. System zum Zuführen von Druckflüssigkeit nach Anspruch 14, bei dem die gegenläufige Abstreifklinge (62) aus Kunststoff besteht und eine Breite von etwa 25,4 mm (1 Inch) und eine Dicke im Bereich von etwa 1,02 bis 1,52 mm (0,04 bis 0,06 Inch) aufweist.

Revendications

1. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression (30), pour presse d'impression lithographique sans clé d'encrage comportant un cylindre de blanchet (10), un cylindre de plaque (15) sur lequel est montée une plaque d'impression, des rouleaux de forme (16), éventuellement un jeu de deux ou plusieurs rouleaux d'encrage (11, 13), et un système (19, 22-25) destiné à amener de l'eau de mouillage à la plaque d'impression, comportant :

un rouleau de dosage (20) ayant une surface (40) qui retient une quantité de fluide d'impression ;

des moyens (42) de logement ayant un premier côté ouvert (46) qui correspond à au moins une partie de ladite surface (40) dudit rouleau de dosage (20) afin de définir une chambre fermée (44) sensiblement remplie dudit fluide d'impression sous pression ;

au moins des premier et deuxième moyens (48, 50) d'étanchéité d'extrémité montés sur des extrémités opposées (52, 54) desdits moyens (42) de logement, chacun desdits premier et deuxième moyens (48, 50) d'étanchéité d'extrémité s'engageant de façon coulissante sur ledit rouleau de dosage (20) ;

une racle inversée (62) destinée à enlever sensiblement le fluide d'impression en excès collant à ladite surface (40) dudit rouleau de dosage (20) lorsque ledit rouleau de dosage (20) tourne au-delà de ladite chambre (44) contenant ledit fluide d'impression, ladite racle inversée (62) étant fixée auxdits moyens (42) de logement et ayant au moins un bord (66) destiné à venir sensiblement en contact avec ladite surface (40) dudit rouleau de dosage (20);

des moyens (68) d'étanchéité fixés auxdits moyens (42) de logement à l'opposé de ladite racle inversée (62) ;

au moins un moyen d'entrée (102) dans lesdits moyens (42) de logement, destiné à admettre ledit fluide d'impression dans ladite chambre (44) et au moins un moyen de sortie (104) dans lesdits moyens (42) de logement, destiné à évacuer du fluide d'impression de ladite chambre (44), lesdits moyens d'entrée (102) et de sortie (104) étant reliés à des moyens (100) destinés à mettre sous pression ledit fluide d'impression; et

ladite racle inversée (62) étant maintenue contre ladite surface (40) dudit rouleau de dosage (20) au moins partiellement par le fluide sous pression dans ladite chambre (44);

caractérisé en ce que :

ledit rouleau de dosage (20) a au moins une surface oléophile et hydrophobe (40);

lesdits moyens d'étanchéité à l'opposé de ladite racle inversée (62) sont une lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) qui est sensiblement plus longue et plus flexible que ladite racle inversée (62) et qui se prolonge à l'intérieur de ladite chambre (44) afin de fournir une zone d'étanchéité de surface (72) allongée à l'opposé dudit moyen (102) d'entrée et à ladite surface adjacente (40) dudit rouleau de dosage (20);

chacun desdits premier et second moyens d'étanchéité d'extrémité (48, 50) comprend un joint (90) composé d'un matériau pliable destiné à former un joint étanche sensiblement fluide pour lesdits moyens de logement (42) en engageant les extrémités de ladite racle inversée (62), les extrémités de ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) et les première et deuxième sections (58, 60) dudit rouleau de dosage (20) ; et des moyens de mise en pression (100) comprenant des moyens (116, 126) destinés à contrôler la vitesse d'écoulement dudit fluide d'impression à travers ladite chambre (44).

2. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) réalise l'étanchéité de manière statique et flotte de manière dynamique, ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) flottant sensiblement et formant un joint hydrodynamique entre ladite surface (40) dudit rouleau de dosage (20) et ladite zone d'étanchéité

de surface (72) de ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) lorsque ledit rouleau de dosage (20) tourne, et ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) venant sensiblement en contact avec ledit rouleau de dosage (20) et formant un joint de contact entre ladite surface (40) dudit rouleau de dosage (20) et ladite zone d'étanchéité de surface (72) de ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) lorsque ledit rouleau de dosage (20) est immobile, rendant ainsi étanche ladite chambre (44) afin de maintenir sous pression ledit fluide d'impression dans ladite chambre (44).

3. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits moyens (100) de mise sous pression dudit fluide d'impression possèdent au moins un réservoir de fluide d'impression (112) situé dans une position indépendante d'une position de ladite chambre (44) dans lesdits moyens de logement (42).

4. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 1, dans lequel ledit rouleau de dosage (20) a au moins des première et deuxième extrémités (32, 34) montées pivotantes autour d'un axe et ayant ladite surface oléophile et hydrophobe (40) entre lesdites première et deuxième extrémités (32, 34);

chacun desdits premier et deuxième moyens d'étanchéité d'extrémité (48, 50) a au moins une première surface (56) destinée à correspondre respectivement à des première et deuxième sections d'extrémité (58, 60) dudit rouleau de dosage (20) ;

ladite racle inversée (62) est fixée à un deuxième côté (64) dudit logement (42);

ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) est fixée à un troisième côté (70) dudit logement (42), ledit troisième côté (70) dudit logement (42) étant opposé audit deuxième côté (64) dudit logement (42);

au moins ledit rouleau de dosage (20), lesdits premier et deuxième moyens d'étanchéité (48, 50), ladite racle inversée (62) et ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) forment un moyen destiné à rendre sensiblement étanche ladite chambre (44) de telle sorte que ledit fluide d'impression soit sous ladite pression;

5. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 1 ou 4, dans lequel ledit logement (42) se trouve situé par rapport à ladite surface (40) dudit rouleau de dosage dans une position qui est l'une des positions angulaires autour de l'axe dudit rouleau de dosage (20);

6. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 4, dans lequel lesdits moyens de mise sous pression (100) sont constitués par un système de circulation comportant une pompe (106) entraînée à une vitesse liée à la vitesse de la presse d'impression, ladite pompe (106) ayant une sortie (108) reliée auxdits moyens d'entrée (102) dudit logement (42) et une entrée (110) reliée à un réservoir de fluide d'impression (112), lesdits moyens de sortie (104) dudit logement (42) étant également reliés audit réservoir de fluide d'impression (112).

7. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 4, dans lequel lesdits moyens de mise sous pression (100) sont constitués l'un système de circulation ayant une pompe (106) dont une sortie (108) est reliée à au moins un clapet de régulation (111) dans au moins un passage de dérivation du système de circulation, ledit passage de dérivation étant également relié à un réservoir de fluide d'impression (112) dans ledit système, ladite sortie de ladite pompe (106) étant également reliée auxdits moyens d'entrée (102) dudit logement (42) et lesdits moyens de sortie (104) dudit logement (42) étant reliés à une entrée (110) de ladite pompe (106) par l'intermédiaire dudit réservoir de fluide d'impression (112);

8. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 6 ou 7, dans lequel ledit réservoir de fluide d'impression (112) est situé dans une position indépendante d'une position de ladite chambre (44) dans ledit logement (42).

9. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 4, dans lequel ledit rouleau de dosage (20) possède en outre au moins un ensemble de calage (94) disposé de façon adjacente à au moins une desdites première et deuxième sections d'extrémité (58, 60) dudit rouleau de dosage (20) afin d'engager ledit logement (42) et de positionner ledit logement (42) par rapport audit rouleau de dosage (20).

10. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 4, dans lequel ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface flexible (68) possède un premier bord fixé audit logement (42) et un deuxième bord (74) positionné dans ladite chambre (44), ladite zone d'étanchéité de surface (72) de ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) étant entre lesdits premier et deuxième bords et sensiblement adjacente à ladite surface (40) dudit rouleau de dosage (20).

11. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 2, dans lequel un rouleau de dosage (20) a au moins des première et deuxième extrémités (32, 34) montées pivotantes autour d'un axe et ayant ladite surface oléophile et hydrophobe (40) entre lesdites première et deuxième extrémités (32, 34);

ledit logement (42) se trouve, par rapport à ladite surface (40) du rouleau de dosage, dans une position qui est l'une des positions angulaires autour de l'axe dudit rouleau de dosage (20);

chaque joint (90) desdits premier et deuxième moyens d'étanchéité d'extrémité (48, 50) a au moins une première surface (56) destinée à correspondre respectivement auxdites première et deuxième sections d'extrémité (58, 60) dudit rouleau de dosage (20);

ladite racle inversée (62) a un premier bord fixé à un deuxième côté (64) dudit logement (42) et a un deuxième bord (66) destiné à venir sensiblement en contact avec ladite surface (40) dudit rouleau de dosage (20) et destinée à enlever le fluide d'impression en excès collant à ladite surface (40) lorsque ledit rouleau de dosage (20) tourne au-delà de ladite chambre (44) contenant ledit fluide d'impression;

ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) est fixée à un troisième côté (70) dudit logement (42), ledit troisième côté (70) dudit logement (42) étant opposé audit deuxième côté (64) dudit logement (42) et ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) possède un premier bord fixé audit logement (42) et un deuxième bord (74) s'étendant dans ladite chambre (44), ladite zone d'étanchéité de surface (72) dudit élément d'étanchéité de surface (68) étant entre lesdits premier et deuxième bords; et

lesdits moyens de mise sous pression (100) possèdent un réservoir de fluide d'impression (112) qui est situé dans une position indépendante d'une position de ladite chambre (44) dans ledit logement (42).

12. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 4 ou 11, dans lequel ledit premier côté ouvert (46) dudit logement (42) a une longueur sensiblement égale à une longueur axiale de ladite surface (40) dudit rouleau de dosage (20).

13. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 4 ou 11, dans lequel un moyen d'oscillation est relié audit rouleau de dosage (20), ledit logement (42) étant immobile lorsque ledit rouleau de dosage (20) oscille.

14. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 11, dans lequel lesdits moyens de mise sous pression (100) sont constitués d'un système de circulation comportant une pompe (106) entraînée à une vitesse liée à la vitesse de la presse d'impression, ladite pompe (106) ayant une sortie (108) reliée auxdits moyens d'entrée (102) dudit logement (42) et une entrée (110) reliée à un réservoir de fluide d'impression (112), lesdits moyens de sortie (104) dudit logement (42) étant également reliés audit réservoir de fluide d'impression (112).

15. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 11, dans lequel lesdits moyens de mise sous pression (100) sont constitués d'un système de circulation comportant une pompe (106) dont une sortie (108) est reliée à au moins un clapet de régulation (111) dans au moins un passage de dérivation du système de circulation, ledit passage de dérivation étant également relié à un réservoir de fluide d'impression (112) dans ledit système, ladite sortie de ladite pompe (106) étant également reliée auxdits moyens d'entrée (102) dudit logement (42) et lesdits moyens de sortie (104) dudit logement (42) étant reliés à une entrée (110) de ladite pompe (106) en passant par ledit réservoir de fluide d'impression (112).

16. Système d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 4 ou 11, dans lequel chacun desdits moyens d'étanchéité d'extrémité (48, 50) possède un couvercle d'étanchéité (92) fixé audit logement (42) contenant ledit joint (90) ayant une configuration qui se conforme sensiblement à la section d'extrémité (58, 60) respective dudit rouleau de dosage (20).

17. Système d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 11, dans lequel ledit rouleau de dosage (20) possède en outre des premier et deuxième ensembles de calage (94) disposés de façon adjacente auxdites première et deuxième sections d'extrémité (58, 60) dudit rouleau de dosage (20) respectivement afin d'être appliqués contre ledit logement (42) et positionner ledit logement (42) par rapport audit rouleau de dosage (20).

18. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 1, 4 ou 11, dans lequel des moyens (82) sont prévus pour faire pivoter ledit logement (42) entre au moins une première position de fonctionnement contre ledit rouleau de dosage (20) et au moins une deuxième

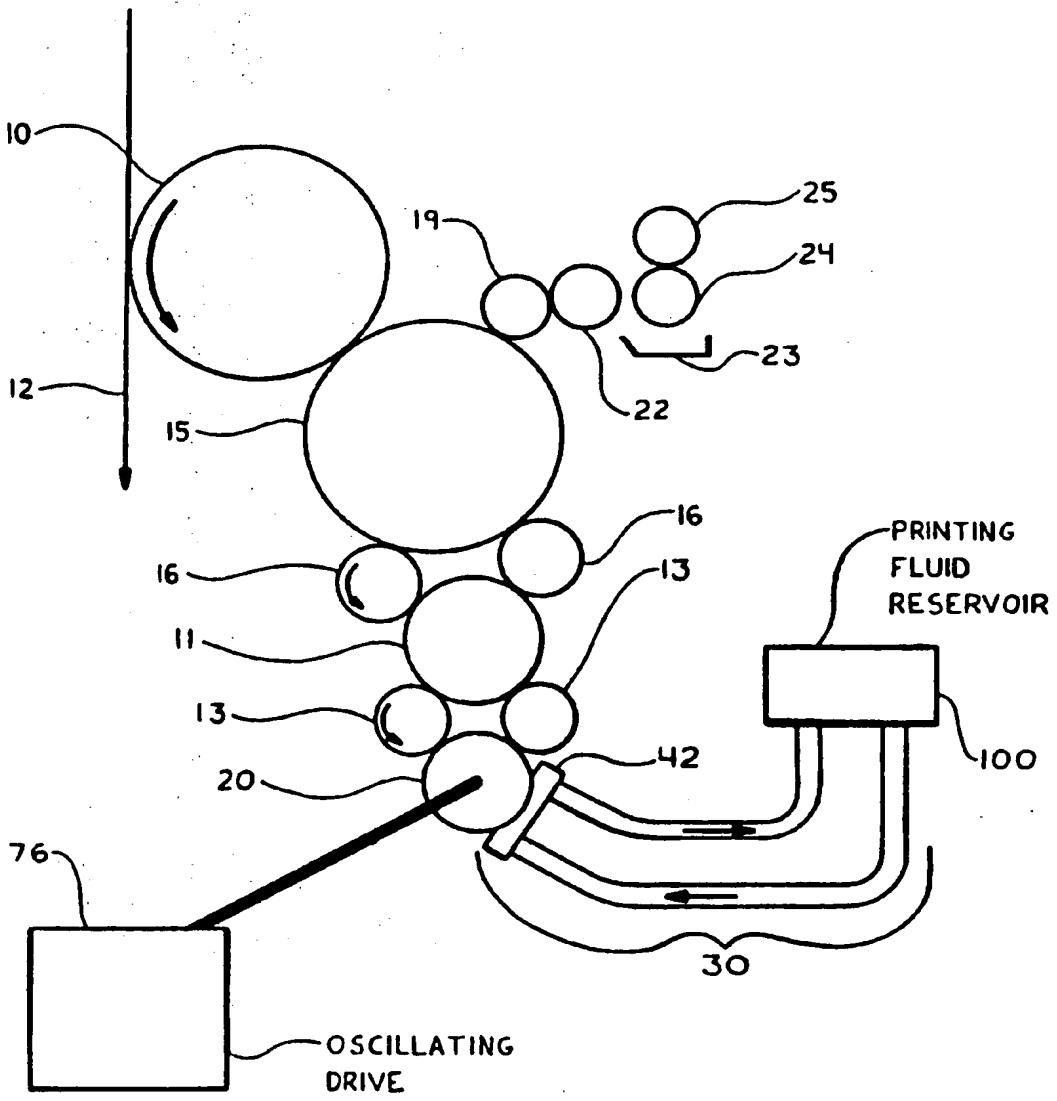
position d'entretien écartée dudit rouleau de dosage (20).

19. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 4 ou 11, dans lequel ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) est réalisée en matière plastique et présente une largeur dans la fourchette d'approximativement 25,4 à 50,8 mm (1 à 2 pouces) et une épaisseur dans la fourchette d'approximativement 0,1 à 0,25 mm (0,004 à 0,01 pouce).

20. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 4 ou 11, dans lequel ladite lame d'étanchéité de surface (68) est réalisée en acier et présente une largeur dans la fourchette d'approximativement 25,4 à 50,8 mm (1 à 2 pouces) et une épaisseur dans la fourchette d'approximativement 0,1 à 0,25 mm (0,004 à 0,01 pouce)

21. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 4 ou 11, dans lequel ladite racle inversée (62) est réalisée en acier et présente une largeur d'approximativement 25,4 mm (1 pouce) et une épaisseur dans la fourchette d'approximativement 0,1 à 0,25 mm (0,004 à 0,01 pouce).

22. Dispositif d'apport de fluide d'impression selon la revendication 14, dans lequel ladite racle inversée (62) est réalisée en matière plastique et présente une largeur d'approximativement 25,4 mm (1 pouce) et une épaisseur dans la fourchette d'approximativement 1,02 à 1,52 mm (0,04 à 0,06 pouce).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30
OSCILLATING
DRIVE

FIG.1

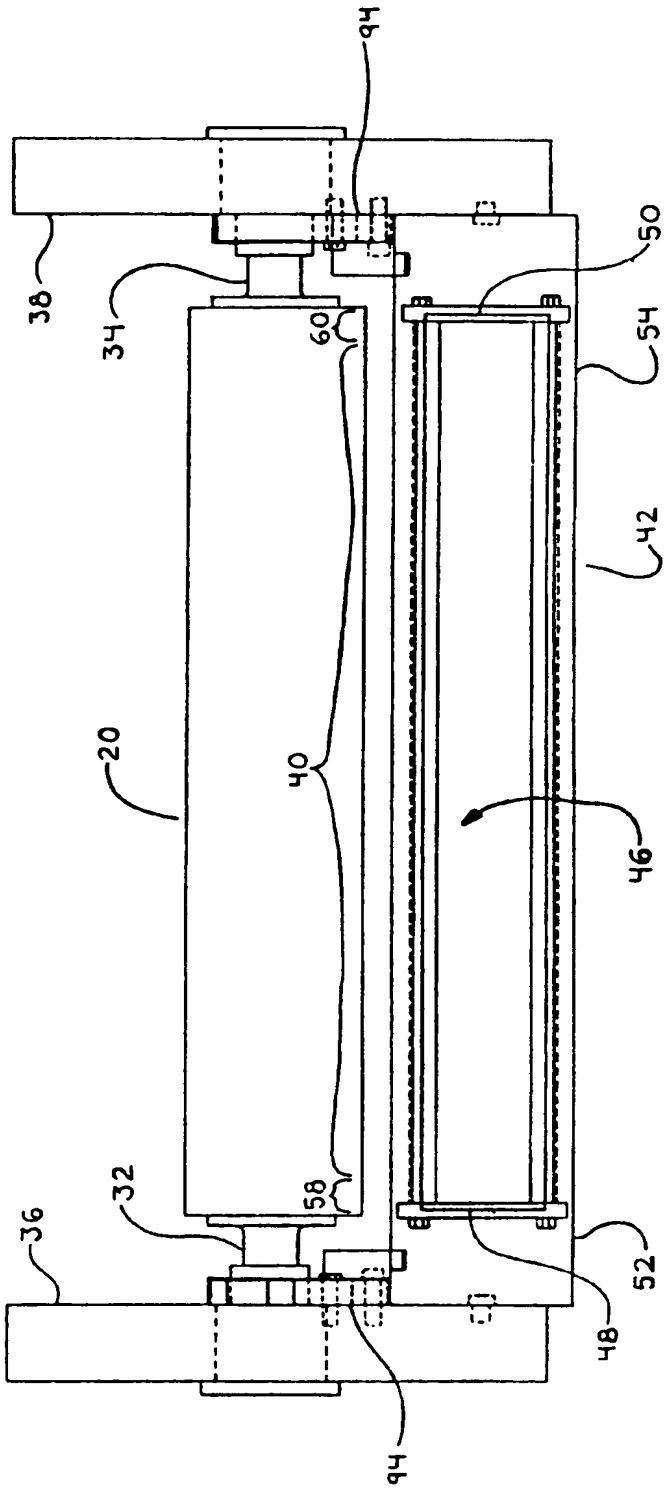


FIG.2

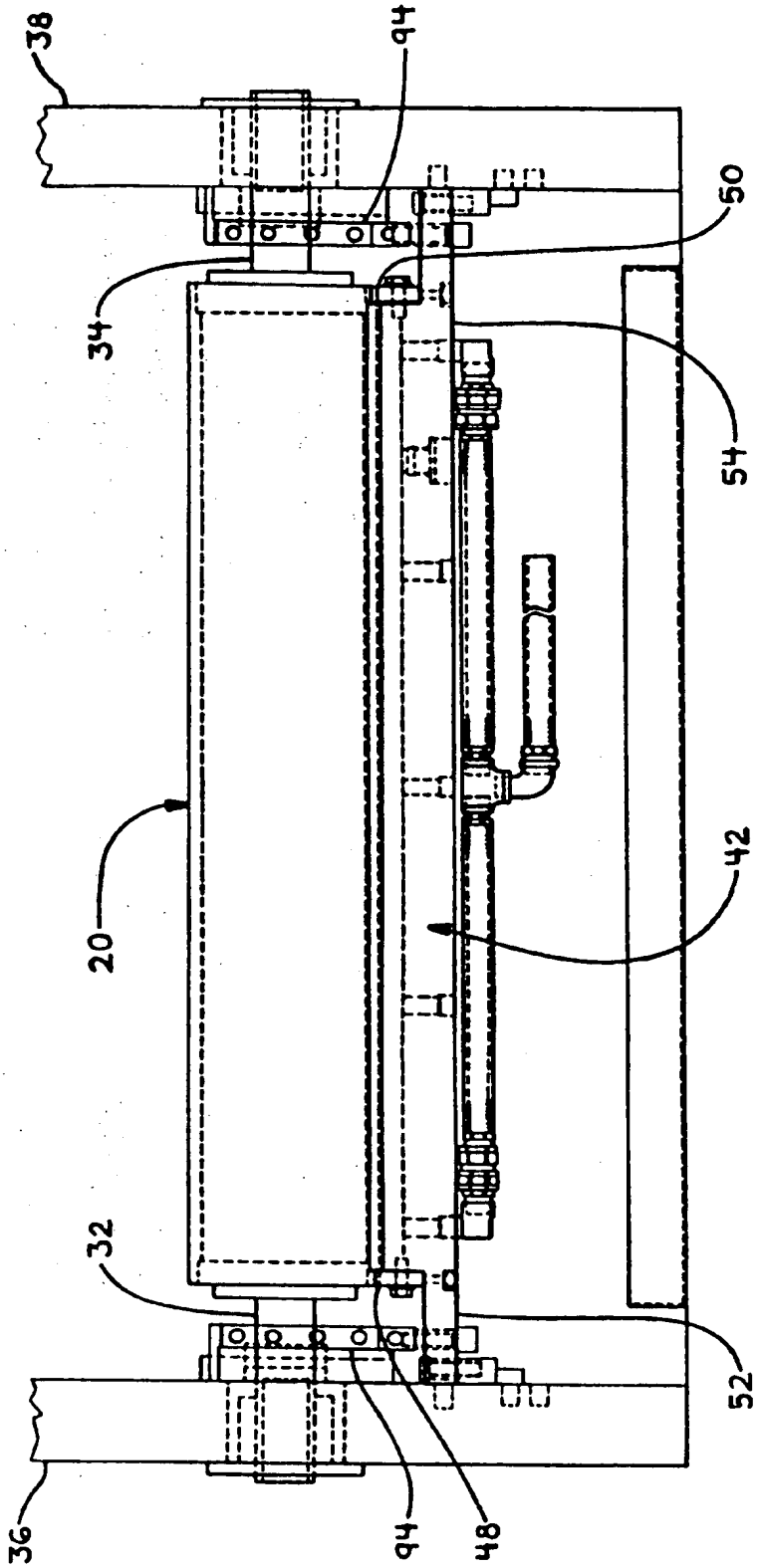


FIG. 3

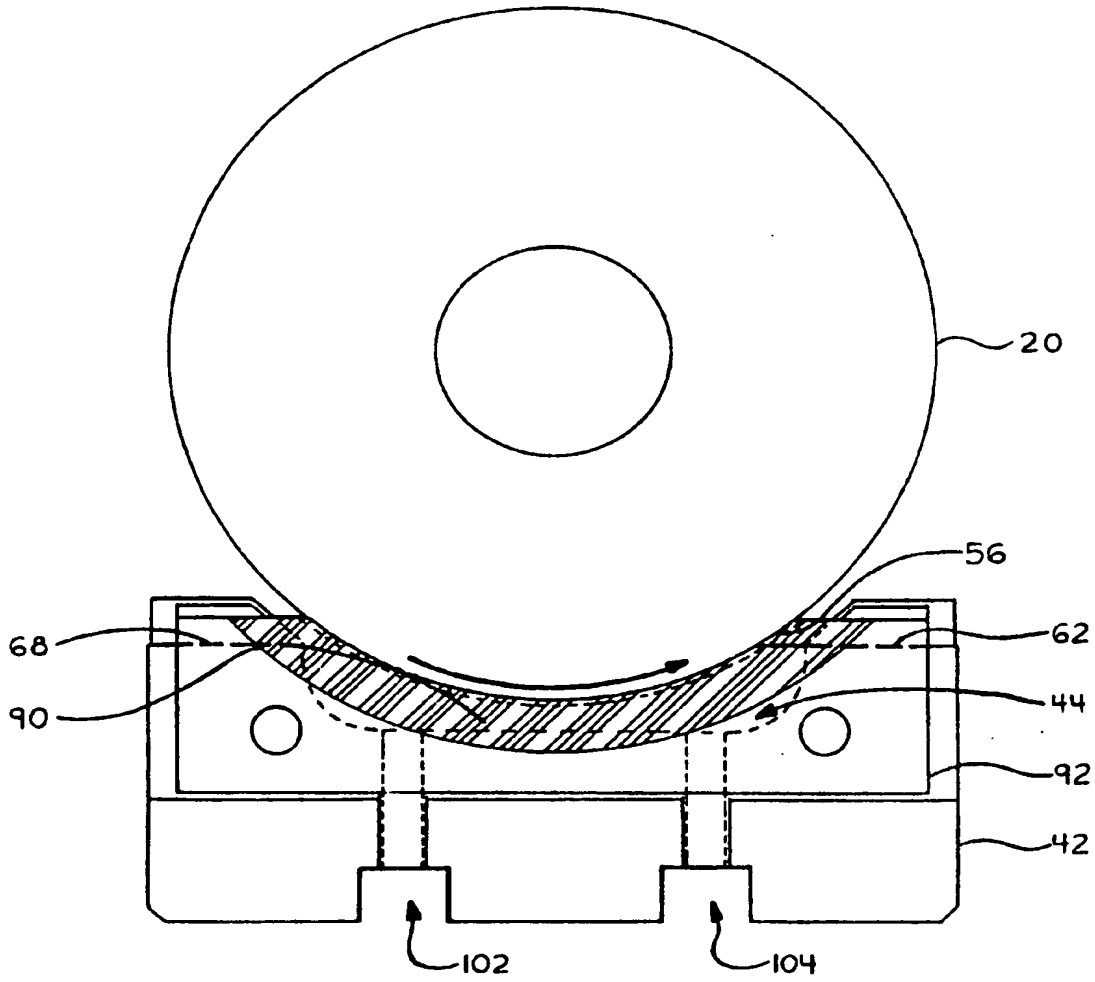


FIG.4

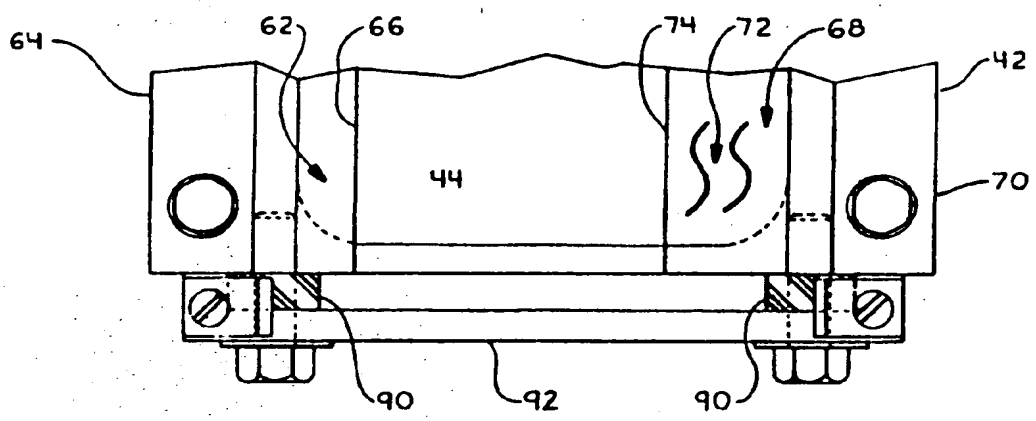


FIG.5

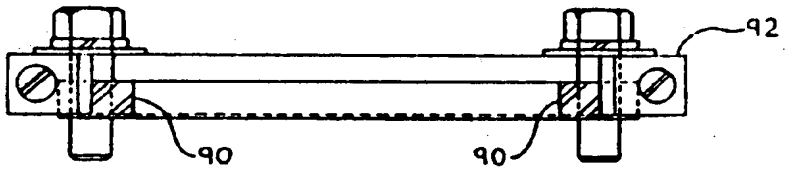


FIG.11

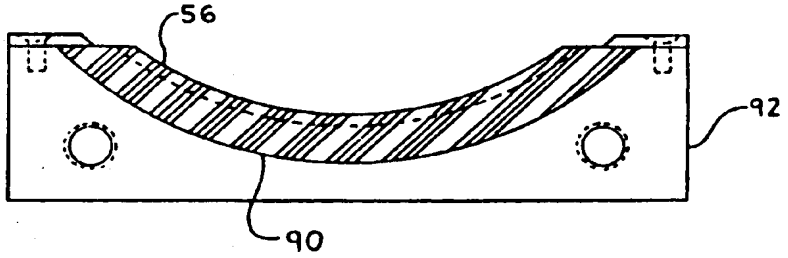
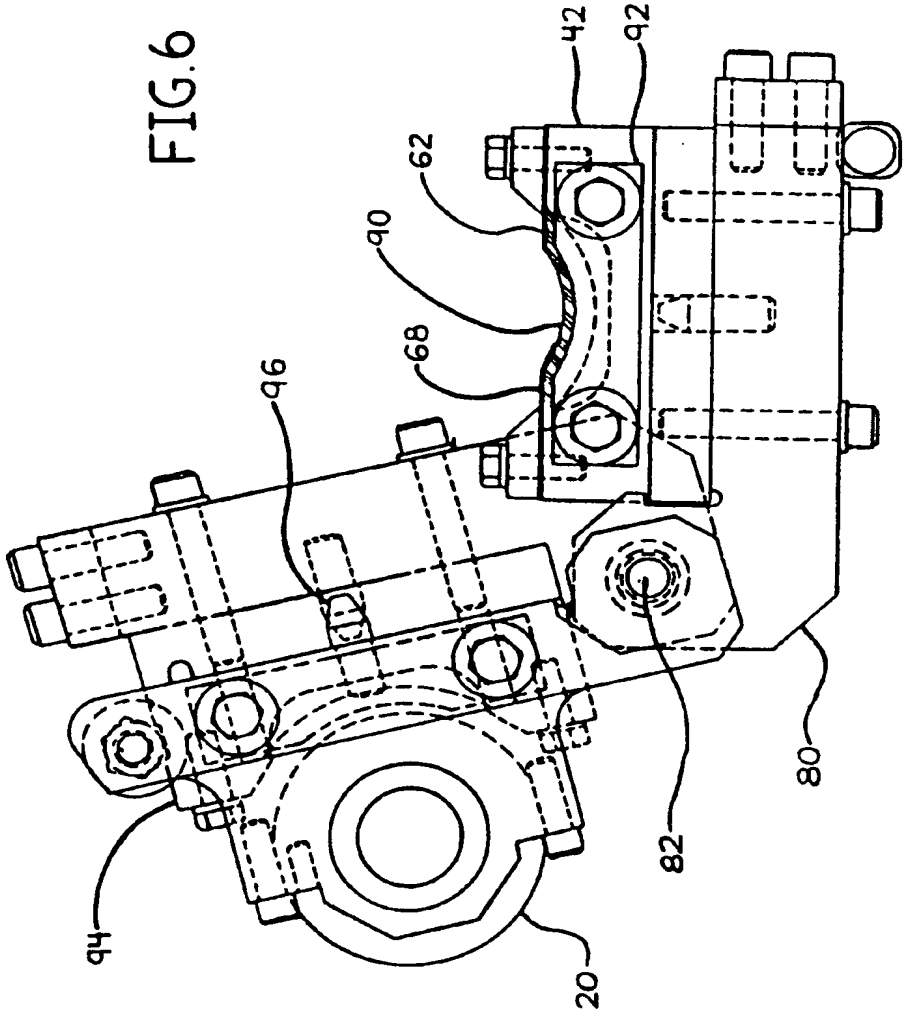


FIG.10

FIG.6



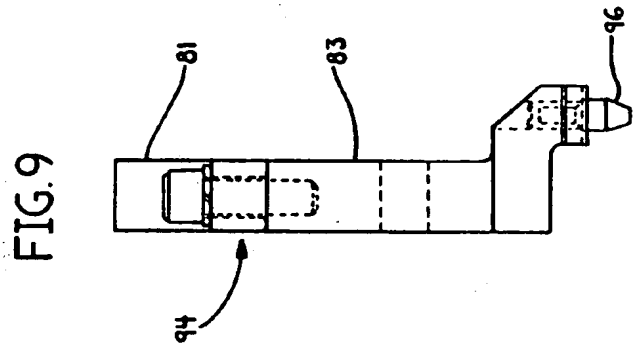


FIG.9

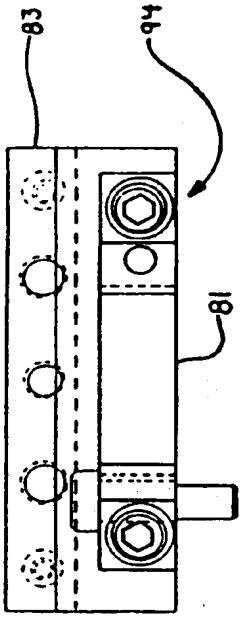


FIG.8

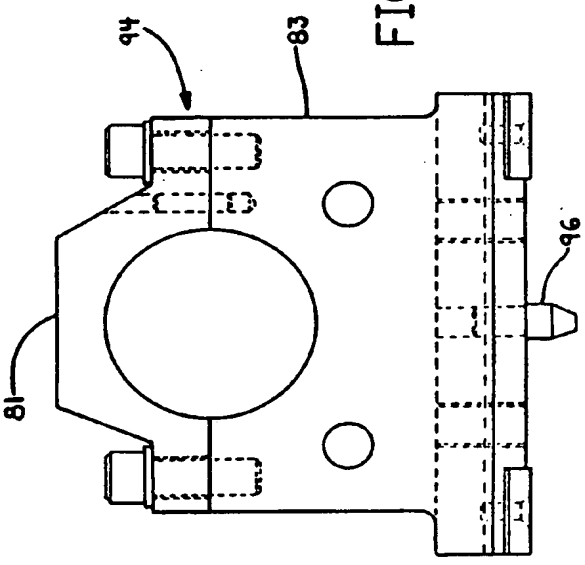
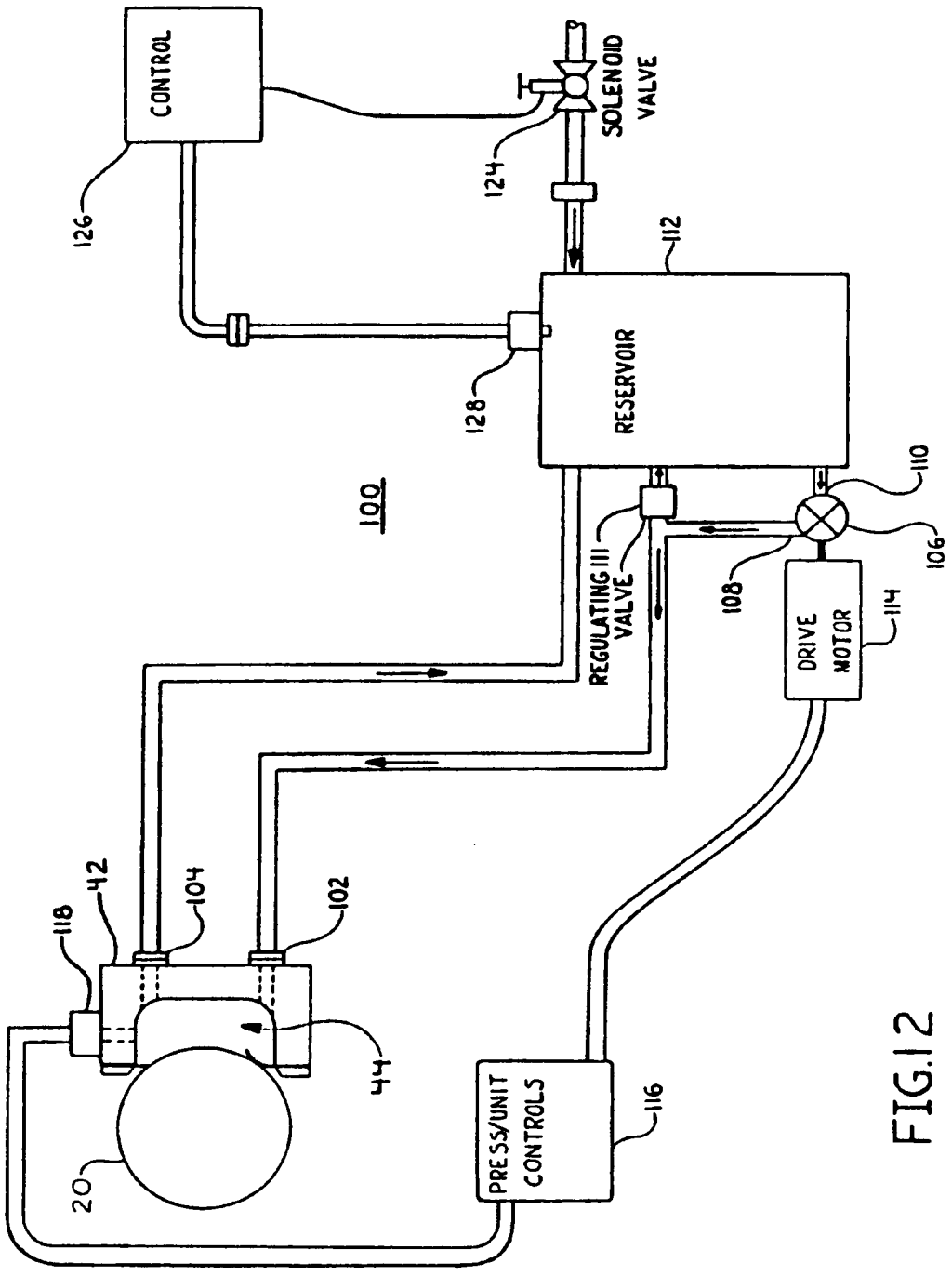


FIG.7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RESERVOIR
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REGULATING VALVE
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DRIVE MOTOR
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PRESS/UNIT CONTROLS
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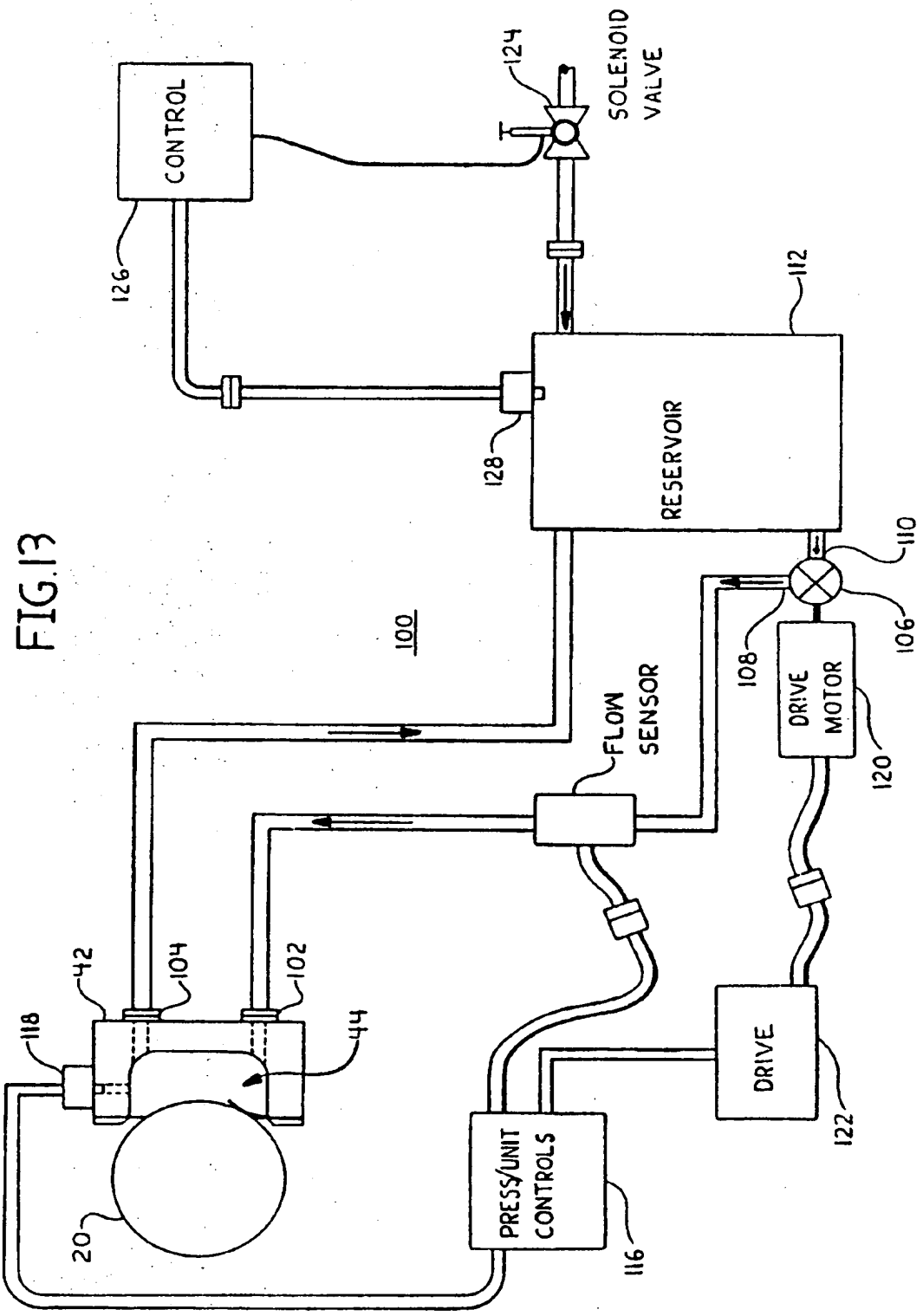
FIG.12

FIG.13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